



Christmas in the Tropics

It don't seem much like Christmas,
Here in these Southern seas,
With the land a dream of springtime,
An' the fruit upon the trees:
The birds are singin' sweetly,
The sun shines bright an' warm,
But I jes' can't think 'tis Christmas,
With no snow, nor ice, nor storm.
As long as I can reckon,
I've kept each Christmas Day,
Way back in Indianny,
In the good, old-fashioned way:
Oh how 'twould sometimes snow there!
By Gosh! how hard she'd freeze!
And now—well, this aint Christmas,
With this soft Pacific breeze,
Why we'd overcoats with collars,
That was made of beaver fur,
And out-doors without ear-muffs,
We wouldn't dare to stir;
And here they're wearin' clothin'

You can see through to the skin,
And they wish you "Merry Christmas!"
Lord! I jest can't take it in.
Then the skatin' an' the sleighin',
And frolics in the snow,
When with bob-sled an' a hay-rack,
A ridin' we would go;
An' the gals 'ud cuddle closer,
An' the boys 'ud lark and spoon,
Jest fancy actin' that a-way
Beneath a harvest moon.
An' yet I guess it's Christmas,
For the bells were loudly ringin',
An' I heard the little choir-boys,
The "Herald Angels" singin';
An' the preacher took the text I've heard
Again, an' yet again,
At Christmas seasons: "Peace on earth,
Good will toward all men."

HERBERT M. AYRES.



By Geo. Dillingham

Chinatown on Christmas eve has the outward semblance of any other part of the city, for heathen renunciation of the cult of Christ does not carry with it any prejudice against supplying Christians with such articles of pecuniary value as are deemed appropriate for gifts at this festal period. It is the levelling influence of trade, which knows no creed but faith in the dollar, that makes John Chinaman as merry at Christmas tide as his more enlightened fellow. He who has limited means with which to make many little hearts at home happy is tempted to go into Chinese stores to make his purchases. Hop Hai Kee's great, swinging sign has a line of Chinese characters which, translated freely into Anglo-Hawaiian, reads: "More cheap, more better"—a proverb whose principle is adhered to by many who go shopping in the Chinese quarter.

It was on Christmas eve that a middle-aged man dressed in

rough loosely fitting close accosted a Chinese hackman who was seated in his carriage calmly speculating on the chances of loads among the throng of passers-by on the street. The hackman, with that keen perception of character which a long practice of his calling had giving him, concluded that the man was a sailor, and asked him where he wanted to go.

"Do y u know where John Urquhart lives?" asked the stranger, getting into the hack.

"Yes, Palama; he my blother," replied the hackman, whipping up his horse and driving into King street.

"Your brother!" exclaimed the passenger.

"Yes, I mally wahine all same his wahine."

"I no sabe."

"One wahine he mally all same sister my wahine."

"O, I see, brother-in-law."

"All same blother."

"Yes, brother, that's right; ha, ha. You love your brother?"

"Sure."

"He got family?"

"Plenty. All go way for Clismas. He been stop home alone."

"Well, you take me to your brother just as quick as that Abdallah will let you."

The vehicle was soon out of the busy street and passing through suburban by-ways, bordered by the gardens, taro-patches and rice-fields of the ever-plodding Chinamen. A waning moon shed a glimmer of light over the landscape and a gentle, southerly breeze, scarcely ruffling leaf or flower, lent a warmth to the atmo-